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KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1945.

Kingsbridge:

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Kingsbridge Rural District Council

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CLERK TO M.O.H.

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Miss Musgrave, 1/9/45.

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KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1945.

Medical Officer of Health: Dr. W. C. Smales, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health: Dr. W. H. Cowper, M.B., B.C.H., B.A.O.

Surveyor and Senior Sanitary Inspector: Mr. N. Harris, A.I.A.S., C.R.S.I.

Second Sanitary Inspector: Mr. M. S. Powling, C.R.S.I. (Inspector of Meats and Foods).

Temporary Sanitary Inspector (*Housing Survey*): Mr. A. E. Smith.

Temporary Sanitary Inspector: Mr. W. Chalcraft, M.S.I.A., (Appointment terminated 31/12/45).

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to present my Report for the Year 1945.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area—70,818 acres.

Population—10,280.

Number of Inhabited Houses at the end of 1945, according to the Rate Book—3,861.

Number of Unoccupied Houses—50.

Rateable Value—£55,370.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate—£236. 6s. 6d.

The Area is mainly an agricultural one, although on the coast-line many of the inhabitants are employed in sea-faring pursuits.

There is an annual influx of visitors during the holiday season over the whole of the district, to which they are attracted by the favourable climate and the beauty of the surroundings.

The conditions of employment and environs are conducive to health and longevity.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS :

Legitimate—	Male	68	Female	77	Total	145
Illegitimate	Male	9	Female	7	Total	16
		77		84		161

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—15.66.

STILL BIRTHS—Male, 2. Female, 1. Total, 3.

Rate per 1,000 of the total (live and still) births—18.29.

DEATHS—145. Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—14.10.

Deaths from Puerperal and post-abortive sepsis—Nil.

Deaths from other maternal causes—Nil.

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :

(*a*) All infants per 1,000 live births—37.26.

(*b*) Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births—41.37.

(*c*) Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births—Nil.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)—16.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)—Nil.

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)—Nil.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age)—1.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING THE YEAR 1945.

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases Admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	18	7	—
Meningitis	1	—	—
Erysipelas	2	—	—
Whooping Cough	2	—	—
Measles	181	—	—
Pneumonia	4	—	8
Chicken-pox	2	—	—
Pertussus	8	8	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	1	—
Polio Myelitis .	1	—	—
TOTALS	220	16	8

The increased number of notifications of Infectious Diseases was largely due to the prevalence of measles in the district. The cases occurred chiefly in the months of April and May, and were of a mild character.

One case of Scarlet Fever was removed to the Modbury Isolation Hospital, and six cases to the Paignton Isolation Hospital. The diagnosis in two cases were changed to Rubella. One was a military case.

The eight cases of Pertussus were admitted to the Modbury Isolation Hospital.

The case of Puerperal Pyrexia was admitted to the City Isolation Hospital.

AMBULANCES—For infectious cases an ambulance is now available, and is located at Modbury.

For non-infectious cases and accidents, the St. John Ambulance Association provide an ambulance.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.—Close co-operation is maintained with the Devon County Council Health Visitors. The parent of every child in the district receives a birthday card for the child when he or she reaches one year, advising immunisation; the Health Visitor's visit, follow up and advise; every effort being made to get the child protected. Frequent clinics are arranged throughout the district.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY are a Medical Officer of Health (also Medical Officer of Health of Plympton Rural District, Kingsbridge Urban District, Salcombe Urban District, Kingsbridge and Salcombe Port Sanitary Authority, and Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health (occasional).

Two whole-time Sanitary Inspectors.

LABORATORY FACILITIES are provided by the County Council for the examination of milk and water in addition to the usual bacteriological examinations. Seale Hayne College also examines milk samples in cases of suspected mastitis. Urgent bacteriological specimens may be sent to the laboratory at the Prince of Wales' Hospital, Plymouth.

PROVISION OF ANTITOXIN.—Medical men practising in the district can obtain a free supply of antitoxin. Material is also supplied for the immunisation of children of the district against Diphtheria free of cost.

LIST OF PUBLIC VACCINATORS.

KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT.

Name of Parishes.	Name of Public Vaccinators.
Charleton, Aveton Gifford, Modbury, Bigbury, Kingston, and Ringmore	Dr. W. H. Cowper, Kingsbridge.
Blackawton and Stokefleming	Dr. J. H. Broderick, 33, Victoria Rd., Dartmouth.
Churchstow, South Milton, Thurlestone, West Alvington, Buckland-tout-Saints, E. Allington, Loddiswell and Woodleigh	Dr. W. G. Verniquet, Barnfield, Kingsbridge.
Chivelstone, Sherford, Slapton, South Pool and Stokenham	Dr. W. H. Simonds, Chillington.
E. Portlemouth, Malborough and South Huish	Dr. R. H. Dummett, Homeleigh, Salcombe.

Vaccination Officer: Mr. H. S. Smith.

NURSING IN THE HOME.—None provided by this Authority but the County Council employs Health Visitors in the district. There are seven District Nurses, whose services are of the greatest value in the Rural District.

MIDWIVES.—The Midwives Act is administered by the County Council. There are five practising midwives in the district.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE CENTRE.—There is a centre in Kingsbridge, which is open on the first and third Tuesdays in each month.

VENEREAL DISEASES TREATMENT.—At the Venereal Disease Dept., City Hospital, Plymouth. Female in-patients are also sent to St. Mary's Home, Exeter. A refund of rail or bus fare can be made in suitable cases by applying to the Medical Officer of the Centre or to the County Medical Officer.

Treatment is also available from a certain number of selected General Medical Practitioners specially approved for the purpose by the County Council, and Ministry of Health. There is one such practitioner at Modbury, and another at Kingsbridge.

ORTHOPAEDIC TREATMENT is available through the Devon Association for Orthopaedics as In-patients at Exeter and Ivybridge; and for adults at Mount Gold Hospital, Plymouth. For Out-patients there is a clinic at Kingsbridge, and the South-West Clinic, which deals with this district as well, is held at the Mutley Hall Assembly Rooms, Plymouth.

THE SOUTH HAMS COTTAGE HOSPITAL provides beds for 16 patients from Kingsbridge and the surrounding districts :

Men's Ward	.....	.....	6 beds
Women's Ward	.....	.....	6 beds
Children's Cots	.....	.....	2
Private Wards	.....	.....	2 (one bed each)

It is supported by voluntary effort.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.—The Treveor Auxiliary Isolation Hospital at Modbury closed on 25th March, 1945, and the staff were transferred to Lower Combe Royal Auxiliary Isolation Hospital, Kingsbridge. Lower Combe Royal was finally closed on 30th November, 1945. By arrangement with the Plymouth City Council, infectious cases requiring hospital treatment may be sent to Swilly Isolation Hospital, Plymouth, and to the Isolation Hospitals at Torquay and Paignton.

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1945.

	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
Age Periods.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 years	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
15—25 years	—	1	—	1	1	1	—	—
25—35 years	2	2	—	—	1	—	1	—
35—45 years	3	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
45—55 years	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 years	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65 and over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	9	5	—	2	4	2	1	—

STAFF.—Mr. M. S. Powling rejoined the staff of the Public Health Department on 12th November, 1945, as Second Sanitary Inspector.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

SCHOOLS.—There are 19 Elementary Schools in the District. Inspections were carried out by the Sanitary Inspector, and in cases requiring further attention by the Medical Officer of Health.

During the year 58 notices were received referring to 187 children who were excluded from school because of communicable disease or because they were contacts.

They were as follows :

Scarlet Fever	10
Whooping Cough	5
Measles	152
Impetigo	3
Chicken-pox	12
Mumps	5

WATER.—Certain portions of the district are supplied from the mains of the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board, namely : Aveton Gifford, Buckland-tout-Saints, East Prawle, Loddiswell, Modbury, Sherford, South Milton, part of Thurlestone and West Alvington.

This provides a pure and satisfactory supply to the parishes named. Approximately 585 have a piped water supply on to the house, and 274 houses draw their water from standpipes.

The remainder of the district rely on local springs and wells, viz. :

Bigbury, Blackawton, Charleton (East and West), Churchstow, East Allington, East Portlemouth, Kingston, Malborough, Ringmore, Slapton, Stokenham, Hope, South Pool, Stokefleming, Strete and Woodleigh.

In most cases these supplies are unsatisfactory as to quantity, especially during a dry period. Large distribution extensions from the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board mains were contemplated before the war, and have been given a high priority for post-war work to be undertaken by the Council. When these extensions are complete, most of the district will be well supplied with water.

Approximately 600 have a piped water supply to the house, and 400 houses take their water from standpipes.

The parts of the district supplied with water from the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board are provided with an excellent supply both in quality and quantity.

Bacteriological examinations of the raw, untreated water are regularly made for the Water Board.

Thirty samples of treated water were taken from the supply mains in the district, 18 being completely satisfactory and 12 showing the presence in small numbers of coli-aerogenes bacteria.

No trace of plumbo-solvency was found in the water during the year.

The parts of the district dependent on local water supplies are the source of frequent complaints and difficulties owing to the generally unsatisfactory local water supplies. Large extensions of the mains of the Water Board and Council's distribution mains are contemplated, and plans and detailed proposals have already been submitted to the Ministry of Health.

THURLESTONE.—Work of extending the public water main through the village of Thurlestone is in hand. This is part of the scheme for supplying the Villages of East and West Buckland and Bantham from the Moorland supply, also linking up with the South Milton Reservoir so as to form a ring main.

MALBOROUGH.—The existing C.I. high-level water tank was found to be in a very defective condition owing to action from the sea air, and has been replaced with a new steel sectional tank.

SEWERAGE.

THURLESTONE.—The defective C.I. Sewer pipes at the end of the sea outfall has now been replaced.

TORCROSS.—During Battle Training Operations a portion of the sea outfall end of this sewer was damaged. Sand and shingle entered the damaged portions, and it was necessary to take up, clean, replace and relay approximately two hundred and fifty feet of the C.I. piping.

MALBOROUGH.—Cottages at Alston Gate.—Owing to constant trouble with the septic tank into which these cottages drained, the public sewer was extended for approximately one hundred feet, and the drains from the cottages connected thereto.

BIGBURY-ON-SEA.—This village drains into a large septic tank, and the overflow discharged into the sea. The supervision of this outfall and the sewers generally was undertaken by the Agent to the Estate, but owing to labour difficulties the system generally got into a bad state of repair, and the Council was constantly receiving complaints as to its condition. They therefore decided to take the whole system over. The tank, etc., was thoroughly overhauled and cleaned out, defective sewer pipes replaced, and the installation is now working in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

REFUSE COLLECTION.—A scheme whereby practically the whole of the refuse of the Area is collected fortnightly is now in operation.

WATER CONNECTIONS.—During the year twenty-three dwelling houses were connected to the public water supply, namely :

Modbury	2
Chillington	3
Aveton Gifford	7
Bigbury	1
Strete	2
East Prawle	1
Kellaton	1
Sherford	1
Churchstow	1
Loddiswell	1
Ledstone	1
Thurlestone	2

HOUSING.—The Council's first two-year housing programme aims at the erection of 86 permanent traditional-type houses and eight Swedish timber houses on 13 village sites, together with the provision of 30 temporary houses (Arcon) on six sites.

RURAL HOUSING SURVEY.—The Council has appointed a part-time fully-qualified Inspector to visit all properties in the district with a rateable value of less than £16, and to carry out an inspection to ascertain into which category each house falls, thereby providing valuable information as to future housing needs throughout the district.

Up to the end of the year 678 houses were inspected, and classified as follows :

Category (1)	Satisfactory in all respects	58	houses
Category (2)	Minor defects only present	194	,,
Category (3)	Requiring repair, structural alteration or improvement	151	,,
Category (4)	Appropriate for reconditioning	118	,,
Category (5)	Unfit for habitation and beyond repair at a reasonable cost	157	,,
		678	,,

The percentages of Categories (4) and (5) of the total are :

Category (4) 17%
Category (5) 23%

This conveys some indication of the extent of the task which lies ahead.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT.—A great deal of work has been carried out during the year under this heading.

The Council has employed a Rodent Operator on full-time duties, and in addition to routine work, he has co-operated in the large scale assault upon rats in the ex-battle training area. Sewers and Refuse tips have been periodically treated, and 108 complaints have been dealt with, 295 investigations and pre-baiting visits have been made, 76 poison baitings carried out, with a total pick up of rats on the surface of 345.

INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.—Whilst the bulk of this district's fresh meat supply is killed and inspected outside the area, an occasional emergency slaughter takes place, and such of this meat as is condemned, together with blown and unsound tinned stuffs from grocers' shops, totalled 903lbs. during the year.

NUISANCES.—55 complaints were received, and these were dealt with and remedied without the necessity of serving notices.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.—There are 680 dairies and cowsheds in the area, 144 of which were inspected during the year.

MILK SAMPLING.—This work was restricted during the year, but 64 samples were submitted for bacteriological examination, 41 passing and 23 failing.

BAKEHOUSES.—16 Bakehouses are on the register, and they are all in a satisfactory condition.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.—There are in the district 21 slaughter houses. These slaughterhouses are not used at present, except for casualty slaughtering.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

W. C. SMALES,

Medical Officer of Health.